

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY

INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

AMCONSUL BELIZE

AMEMBASSY LONDON

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 246409

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, GT, UK, UN

SUBJECT: BELIZE DISPUTE

REFERENCE: GUATEMALA 5607

1. DEPARTMENT HAS PASSED TO U.K. EMBASSY SUGGESTIONS
CONTAINED IN REFERENE TELEGRAM ON BELIZE RESOLUTION. WE
SUGGEST YOU PASS SAME TEXT TO RICHARDSON OF UKUN.

2. QUOTE. (A). THE MINIMUM THAT BELIZE AND ITS ALLIES
WOULD ACCEPT WOULD BE RECOGNITION OF THE RIGHT OF BELIZEAN
PEOPLE TO INDEPENDENCE. THE GOVERNMENT OF GUATEMALA WOULD
PREFER VAGUER STATEMENTS THAT QUOTE ASPIRATIONS OF
INHABITANTS OF BELIZE SHOULD BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT UNQUOTE
IN FINAL SETTLEMENT. BUT THE GOVERNMENT OF GUATEMALA
ITSELF HAS USED PHRASES OF THIS KIND PRECISELY IN ORDER TO
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PREPARE ITS OWN PEOPLE FOR THE UNAVOIDABLE FACT THAT THERE

WILL EVENTUALLY BE AN INDEPENDENT BELIZE. HOWEVER, IT MUST BE REMEMBERED THAT GUATEMALAN SCHOOLS FOR DECADES HAVE TAUGHT THAT QUOTE BELIZE IS OURS UNQUOTE.

(B). THE MINIMUM THAT GUATEMALA WOULD ACCEPT WOULD BE RECOGNITION THAT THE DISPUTE BETWEEN GUATEMALA AND THE UNITED KINGDOM EXISTS AND A CALL TO BOTH PARTIES TO SEEK A PEACEFUL SOLUTION THROUGH CONTINUED NEGOTIATIONS.

BELIZE WOULD PREFER NOT EVEN TO MENTION NEGOTIATIONS. SHOMAN'S PRIMARY OBJECTIVE QUOTE IS TO SECURE ASSISTANCE OF THE U.N. TO REMOVE CLAIM OF GUATEMALA TO BELIZEAN TERRITORY UNQUOTE. THE CALL FOR NEGOTIATIONS OBVIOUSLY DOES NOT REMOVE THE CLAIM, BUT THE FACT IS THAT GUATEMALA'S CLAIM CANNOT BE REMOVED BY THE UNITED NATIONS AND THIS WILL HAVE TO BE BROUGHT HOME TO BELIZE. THIS IS BELIZE'S BITTER PILL. THE UNITED KINGDOM WOULD PREFER NOT TO GIVE AN APPEARANCE OF LEGITIMACY TO THE GUATEMALAN CLAIM. BUT THIS IS THE PRICE OF ANY RESOLUTION WHICH DOES NOT PROVOKE WAR: IN ORDER TO OBTAIN (A), BELIZE AND THE UNITED KINGDOM MUST CONCEDE (B).

3. THE MOST DIFFICULT REMAINING ISSUE WILL BE SELF-DETERMINATION. WE NOTE THAT SELF-DETERMINATION WAS NOT MENTIONED IN THE LIMA NON-ALIGNED CONFERENCE RESOLUTION AND THIS CONCEPT WOULD BE MUCH MORE DIFFICULT FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF GUATEMALA TO ACCEPT THAN INDEPENDENCE ALONE. ON THE OTHER HAND, BOTH BRITISH AND BELIZEAN AUTHORITIES HAVE REFERRED TO IT REPEATEDLY. IF BELIZE INSISTS ON INCLUDING IT, THE FORM OF WORDS WOULD HAVE TO BE FOUND TIEING THE TIMING OF SELF-DETERMINATION TO PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT OF THE DISPUTE WITH GUATEMALA. FORMULATION WILL BE DIFFICULT TO WORK OUT AND NECESSITY OF LINKAGE, ONCE DRIVEN HOME TO BELIZEANS, MAY LESSEN THEIR ENTHUSIASM FOR INCLUDING THE CONCEPT. IF SELF-DETERMINATION IS INCLUDED AND LINKAGE IS NOT ESTABLISHED IN THE RESOLUTION, THE GOVERNMENT OF BELIZE WILL INTERPRET THE UNITED NATIONS VOTE AS QUOTE HAVING ESTABLISHED THE RIGHT TO SELF-DETERMINATION AND INDEPENDENCE OF BELIZE BECOMES SOLELY A DOMESTIC ISSUE FOR BELIZEAN PEOPLE THEMSELVES
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TO RESOLVE UNQUOTE. THIS IS EXACTLY THE INTERPRETATION THE GOVERNMENT OF GUATEMALA FEARS AND WHAT IT APPEARS PREPARED TO GO TO WAR TO PREVENT. UNQUOTE. KISSINGER

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